family to compass the death of a member of the slayer's family. This custom was called *kudippaka* (literally, *house feud*), or in an abbreviated form, *kuduppu*. One curious fact connected with this custom was that the chieftain of the district intervened when a man was slain, and the body of the deceased was by him taken to his enemy's house, and the corpse and the house were burnt together. It is understood that an out-house was usually selected for this purpose, but it was a common phrase to say—

'the slain rests in the yard of the slayer.'

"Again when mortal offence was given by one man to another, a solemn contract used to be entered into before the chieftain of the locality to fight a *duel*, the chieftain himself being the umpire. Large sums (up to a thousand fanams or two hundred and fifty rupees) used to be deposited as the battle-wager, and these sums formed one source (*ankam*) of the chieftain's revenue, and the right to levy them was sometimes transferred along with other privileges appertaining to the tenure of the soil. A preparation and training (it is said) for twelve years preceded the battle in order to qualify the combatants in the use of their weapons. The men who fought were not necessarily the principals in the quarrel—they were generally their champions. It was essential that one should fall, and so both men settled all their worldly affair before the day of combat."

The origin of the duo-decimal period is obscure, but to this day it obtains in Malabar (and in Malabar only) in relation to all agricultural affairs. The land, in contradistinction to the rest of the Presidency (as a rule), is the absolute property of the landholders—the whole of Malabar is; the landholders let out their land under certain conditions for periods of twelve years. This is the ordinary period of tenure; now a days, much of the land is leased informally on a yearly tenure. Tenants must renew their right to possession of their land every twelve years. The subject of land tenure in Malabar is a very extensive one, and we will not discuss it, resting satisfied with having noted the observance of the twelve yearly cycle in connection with it. It is supposed to be governed by the cycle of Jupiter.*

* Friar Jordanus, Bishop of Quilon in the 14th century, said that people make a vow, and to fulfil it cut off their own head before an idol. "Barbosa says that the king of Quilaene or Coliacaud (Calicut). . . . after reigning 12 years, always sacrificed himself to an idol in this way."—"Madras Manual of Administration," vol. iii, page 643.

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AWI India
Kerala AWII

454 The families which have made savings are very few in proportion to the population both in the 'town' and in the village area. There is a big Nambudiri janmi in the village. He owns very much land which he has sublet and holds the custody of much [428] devaswom land. As the partition of family property does not exist in a Nambudiri family, their property only increases. The joint property system also obtains among the Nayars, but the Nayar families which are well-to-do and have made savings could be numbered on the fingers. The majority of them are poor and many of them occupy themselves in work for wages. The Brahmans other than Nambudiri Brahmans follow the divided property system.* I can only count four or five families which possess wealth to the value of Rs. 10,000 and above and only one or two which have Rs. 20,000. Most of the Brahmans are comparatively poor. Some are engaged in Government service for a paltry pay of Rs. 20 per month or less, and few are able to save much out of this pay.

No more capital is invested in agriculture than is absolutely necessary from year to year, as for replenishing the stock, implements, etc., and clearing the fields of rubbish and making it [312] ready to receive the rains. Bunds are also constructed, to store water in the water course which runs on the north of the village area, by persons whose lands lie near it, but these dams last only during the summer. A few indeed improve their land by digging it, and one or two have made new fields on land previously waste. About one-tenth of the savings could be said to be utilized in these ways. No one invests his earnings in savings banks.

[424] Lending to neighbours is *the* form of investing one's savings, until they come up to a round sum which can be invested in landed property. A few people in the town take advantage of others' difficulties to lend money at exorbitant interest. Many are in debt.

454 All castes and conditions of men try to accumulate their savings
● 525 by subscribing to a *kuri*. A *kuri* serves the purpose of a savings bank. There are three chief kinds—*bhangati-kuri*, auction-*kuri* and lottery-*kuri*. The first prevails among the lower castes and consists of small subscriptions. The *kuri* is started by a *kuri-muppan* (stake-holder) with a certain specified amount as principal, each member subscribing an equal amount. The stake-holder is entrusted with the task of giving a dinner to all the members, each member contributing two or four annas for the purpose. On the day appointed for the *kuri*, the members bid down the amount and the bidden amount is collected from each of the several members and paid to the bidder. Auction-*kuri* is similar to this, but the dinner is dispensed with and the *kuri* deals with large amounts subscribed by well-to-do men. In a lottery-*kuri*, a number of persons agree that each should subscribe a certain sum of money by periodical instalments and that each in his turn, as determined by lot, should take the whole of the subscription for each instalment, all being returned the amount of their subscriptions and the common fund being lent to each subscriber in turn.

454 Every decent householder among the Brahmans spends some
[301] money (at least Rs. 60) on gold ornaments for his wife or other female relatives. The other castes rarely use gold ornaments or jewellery of any cost.

* I.e., on the death of a man his property is equally divided